

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel Claims 1 to 12 and add new Claims 30 to 39 as shown below. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Withdrawn) A method for imaging a computing device from an attached storage device, the method comprising steps of:

determining whether to boot the computing device from the attached storage device;

responsive to the determining, executing boot code on the computing device to acquire an image from the attached storage device; and

booting the computing device using the acquired image.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 13, wherein the executing step further comprises acquiring an image from the attached storage device which comprises a flash memory mass storage device which is attached to the universal serial bus port.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the determining step further comprises:

accessing an installed image in a memory of the computing device;

identifying the image on the attached storage device; and

comparing the identified image with the installed image.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the determining step further comprises:

parsing the image on the attached storage device for a boot flag, wherein the boot flag indicates at least one condition for booting the image; and

evaluating the at least one condition.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the booting step further comprises:

loading the image from the attached storage device into a computing device memory; and

determining whether the image requires authentication.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 17, further comprising:

receiving authentication data from a user responsive to determining whether the image requires authentication; and

decrypting the image using the authentication data.

19. (Withdrawn) A method for providing customized software for a computing device, the method comprising steps of:

receiving a customer order for the computing device;

parsing the customer order to determine configuration data;

building an image using the configuration data; and

writing the image to a storage device, the storage device being distributable to the customer.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving step further comprises:

obtaining the customer order from an order processing system.

21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the building step further comprises:

obtaining at least one component from a database; and

assembling the at least one component into the image.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the building step further comprises:

generating a query to a configuration database based on the configuration data from the customer order; and

receiving the image from the configuration database responsive to the query.

23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein the configuration database includes a plurality of stored images.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, further comprising:  
coupling the storage device to the computing device; and  
booting the computing device from the image stored in the storage device.
25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, further comprising:  
packaging the storage device separate from the computing device for distribution to the customer.
26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, further comprising:  
packaging the storage device with the computing device for distribution to the customer.
27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the storage device comprises one of a flash memory mass storage device, a compact flash storage device, a universal serial bus flash drive, an IEEE 1394 flash drive, and a removable mass storage device.
28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 19, wherein the computing device includes boot code for accessing the image from the storage device and for producing a configured computing device.
29. (Withdrawn) A system for imaging a computing device from an attached storage device, the system comprising:  
means for determining whether to boot the computing device from the attached storage device;  
responsive to the determining means, means for executing boot code on the computing device to acquire an image from the storage device; and  
means for booting the computing device using the acquired image.
30. (New) A method for configuring one or more computing devices connected by a network to a server, the method comprising the steps of:  
attaching a removable storage device to the server, the removable storage device including an image for configuring the one or more computing devices;  
executing code on the server to acquire the image from the attached removable storage device;

distributing the acquired image over the network to the one or more computing devices; and

loading the distributed image into a memory of the one or more computing devices to configure the one or more computing devices.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the loading step includes determining whether the image requires authentication.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, further comprising the steps of:  
receiving authentication data from a user responsive to determining whether the image requires authentication; and  
decrypting the image using the authentication data.

33. (New) The method of claim 30, further comprising the step of booting the one or more computing devices using the loaded image.

34. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the memory of the one or more computing devices is selected from the group consisting of RAM, flash RAM, EEPROM.

35. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the removable storage device is a flash memory mass removable storage device attached to a universal serial bus port.

36. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the attached removable storage device is selected from the group consisting of a flash memory mass removable storage device, a compact flash removable storage device, a universal serial bus flash drive, an IEEE 1394 flash drive, and a removable mass removable storage device.

37. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the image includes program code for one or more of booting the one or more computing devices, loading an operating system, and executing software applications.

38. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the one or more computing devices include one or more of a thin client, a workstation, a personal digital assistant, an electronic mail appliance, and a server.

39. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the network is selected from the group consisting of a local network, a wide area network and a virtual private network.